

60-5761/a

20 JUL 1960

Mrs. S. F. McLean

[Redacted]

My dear Mrs. McLean:

Mr. Dulles has asked me to reply to your letter of July 19, 1960, concerning the French movie "The Unusual America."

Every American at home or overseas should be concerned with the image of the United States held by foreign peoples. Movies such as you describe serve only to distort this image and to impair the atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation which our Government is trying so hard to develop among the nations of the Free World.

I feel quite sure that this film already has come to the attention of the United States Embassy in Paris and that appropriate action is being taken. If you wish to write further, however, may I suggest that you write to the Director, United States Information Agency, Washington 25, D. C., within whose province this particular problem lies.

Your patriotic interest and offer to help are very much appreciated. You have already done your part in effectively bringing this matter to our attention.

Sincerely,

Matthew Baird  
Director of Training

Distribution:

Orig. - Addressee

- 1 - [Redacted] w/basic
- 1 - [Redacted] w/cy/basic
- 2 - PPS, w/cy/basic

OTR/PPS

[Redacted]

Jr.:nld (27 Jul 60)

(EXECUTIVE REGISTER FILE)

July 19, 1960

Exact No. 60-5701

Dear Mr. Dulles,

We have an American friend who is in Paris, France at the present time. Since he speaks French even more fluently than English, it is not unusual for him to go to French movies. He received a letter from him yesterday saying he had seen a French movie: "The Unusual America," (I am using his words) "one of the meanest, most prejudiced films against everything that is U.S. If someone gets his information on the U.S. from this picture, he'll think that we are nothing but a bunch of retarded children, feeble-minded morons, juvenile delinquents, and rock-and-rolling teen-agers. I left the premises raving mad!!"

There is no doubt in my mind that such a picture is Communist propaganda.

Is there anything we can do to let responsible people in the French government know how much we object to such a film that represents the American people in such a damaging way to the French people? To whom could we write to get the best results? Is there

(2)  
anything being done film wise to  
show people in foreign nations  
what the American people are really  
like? Is there anything your agency  
can do about situations of this  
kind? Please let us know what  
can be done and how we might  
possibly help.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. S. F. McLean



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5 August 1960 60-57011

Mr. Dulles:

This is for your information.

You had received the attached letter complaining about a French movie and you asked for further information. The attached issue of Réalités contains a brief article about the maker and some shots from the picture.

The Agency has the film which has been shown to some members of the CA Staff. One viewer states that there are things which would make an American wince. For example, a school for strip teasers. The message is quite simple. The maker proclaims frankly that this is a little seen side of America and he constantly marvels at having been allowed to photograph such scenes.

USIA in Rome and Paris are upset by the picture which would confirm anti-Americans in their suspicions and do little to comfort pro-Americans. In short, although there is no evidence whatsoever of Communist involvement, it is a selective and distorted picture of the image of our country.

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4	yellow copy of		
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APPROVAL		DISPATCH	RECOMMENDATION
XX	COMMENT	FILE	RETURN
CONCURRENCE		INFORMATION	SIGNATURE

Remarks:

Mr. Dulles wants your views on this subject.

*1-2*  
*Pls discuss possible*  
*or open action & reply to DCI.*

OLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER	
NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.	DATE
- Asst. to Director	8/8/60

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APPROVAL	DISPATCH	RECOMMENDATION
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Remarks:

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FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.

DATE

O/D O C I

11/3/60

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1	Director of Training	MB	
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<input type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION		<input type="checkbox"/> SIGNATURE

Remarks:

For your information and preparation of a direct reply.

Office of Training  
No. 60-7097

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ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.	DATE
Asst. to the DCI	7/26/60